

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DACCA 01918 291029Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04
NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 L-03 NSC-05
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 MCT-01 HA-05 OPR-02
A-01 CCO-00 /081 W
-----020354 292040Z /50

R 290900Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8656
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 1918

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS ELAB BG
SUBJECT: BICYCLE RICKSHAW PULLERS ON STRIKE

1. THE DACCA BICYCLE RICKSHAW PULLERS (WALLAHS)
HAVE GONE ON STRIKE THIS MORNING (MARCH 29) TO PROTEST
THE ALLEGED KILLING LAST NIGHT OF A PULLER BY A
RICKSHAW OWNER. ACCORDING TO THE RUMORS, THE OWNER (OR HIS
HIRED THUGS) FATALLY BEAT THE PULLER FOR NOT GIVING HIM THE
FULL DAILY RENTAL FOR THE RICKSHAW. THERE ARE ALMOST NO
RICKSHAWS ON THE STREET THIS MORNING, ALTHOUGH SEVERAL
EMBOFFS OBSERVED A FEW GANGS OF PERHAPS ONE HUNDRED
PULLERS EACH MARCHING WITH UPRaised FISTS IN THE "DOWNTOWN"
COMMERCIAL AREA NEAR THE EMBASSY. DACCA METROPOLITAN
POLICE ARMED WITH RIFLES (AN UNUSUAL SIGHT) HAVE
BEEN SEEN GROUPED IN CLUSTERS ON SEVERAL STREET
CORNERS. THERE ARE NO REPORTS OF SERIOUS VIOLENCE.
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2. COMMENT: THE RICKSHAW PULLERS, OVER 25,000 STRONG
IN DACCA, REPRESENT A POTENTIALLY VOLATILE GROUP, AS MOST OF
THEM LIVE ON THE STREETS AND ARE OVERWORKED AND UNDERPAID.
THAT SUCH A LARGE GROUP, DISPURSED THROUGHOUT THE CITY,
CAN MOBILIZE ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE TO SUPPORT A FELLOW
WALLAH IS AN INDICATION THAT THERE IS A POTENTIAL FOR

SIGNIFICANT MASS ACTION, PARTICULARLY IF THERE WERE AN OVER-REACTION
BY THE POLICE.
SCHNEIDER

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NNN

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